

CLAIMS**We claim:**

- 5 1. A method for generating a map that associates a graphics element of a graphical user interface of a software application with an executable feature of the software application, the method comprising:
- retrieving information descriptive of the graphics element, the information including an executable feature associated with the graphics element;
- 10 storing the executable feature in association with the graphics element; and
- executing an executable feature stored in association with a graphics element.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising, in response to the executable feature exposing a second graphics element:
- 15 retrieving information descriptive of the second graphics element, the information including a second executable feature associated with the second graphics element;
- storing the second executable feature in association with the second graphics element; and
- 20 executing the second executable feature stored in association with the second graphics element.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein the retrieving comprises capturing information pertaining to the graphics element.
- 25 4. The method of claim 1 wherein the storing includes updating an indicator associated with the graphics element when an executable feature stored in association with the graphics element is executed.
- 30 5. The method of claim 1 wherein the storing includes organizing the retrieved information such that an executable feature stored in association with the

graphics element can be interpreted by a computer-executable application capable of accessing the retrieved information.

5 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the storing includes organizing the
retrieved information such that an executable feature stored in association with the
graphics element can be interpreted by a user capable of accessing the retrieved
information from memory.

10 7. The method of claim 1 wherein the executing comprises selecting from the
stored information an executable feature stored in association with a graphics
element.

15 8. The method of claim 7 wherein the selecting comprises selecting an
executable feature not previously executed.

9. The method of claim 8 wherein the selecting comprises reviewing an
indicator to select an executable feature not previously executed.

20 10. The method of claim 7 wherein the selecting comprises selecting
executable features in a depth-first mode of operation.

11. The method of claim 7 wherein the selecting comprises selecting
executable features in a breadth-first mode of operation.

25 12. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for
performing the method recited in claim 1.

30

13. A system for generating a map that associates a graphics element of a graphical user interface of a software application with an executable feature of the software application, the system comprising:

5 a capture agent for retrieving information descriptive of the graphics element, the information including an executable feature associated with the graphics element;

an application driver for storing the executable feature in association with the graphics element; and

10 a command agent for executing an executable feature stored in association with a graphics element.

14. The system of claim 13 wherein the capture agent is invoked by the application driver.

15 15. The system of claim 13 wherein the capture agent submits the retrieved information to the application driver.

16. The system of claim 13 wherein the application driver selects a graphics element to be executed from the stored information.

20 17. The system of claim 16 wherein the application driver selects an executable feature not previously executed.

25 18. The system of claim 17 wherein the application driver reviews an indicator to select an executable feature not previously executed.

19. The system of claim 16 wherein the application driver selects executable features in a depth-first mode of operation.

30 20. The system of claim 16 wherein the application driver selects executable features in a breadth-first mode of operation.

Patent # 5,622,660

21. The system of claim 13 wherein the application driver updates an indicator associated with the graphics element when an executable feature stored in association with the graphics element is executed.

5 22. A method for systematically invoking an executable feature of a software application having a graphical user interface, the graphical user interface displaying a graphics element associated with the executable feature, the method comprising:

retrieving information descriptive of the graphics element, the information
10 including an executable feature associated with the graphics element;
storing the executable feature in association with the graphics element;
selecting from the stored information an executable feature not previously
executed; and
executing the selected executable feature.

15 23. The method of claim 22 further comprising, in response to the executable feature exposing a second graphics element:

retrieving information descriptive of the second graphics element, the
information including a second executable feature associated with the second
20 graphics element;
storing the second executable feature in association with the second
graphics element; and
selecting from the stored information a second executable feature not
previously executed; and
25 executing the selected second executable feature.

24. The method of claim 22 wherein the retrieving comprises capturing information pertaining to the graphics element.

25. The method of claim 22 wherein the storing comprises updating an indicator associated with the graphics element when an executable feature stored in association with the graphics element is executed.

5 26. The method of claim 22 wherein the selecting comprises reviewing an indicator to determine an executable feature not previously executed.

27. The method of claim 22 wherein the selecting comprises selecting executable features in a depth-first mode of operation.

10

28. The method of claim 22 wherein the selecting comprises selecting executable features in a breadth-first mode of operation.

15

29. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps recited in claim 22.

20

FOOTNOTES